

# 2017 WESTERN SLOPE ABILITIES CONFERENCE

Providing education, resources and effective interventions for people dealing with disabilities and/or mental health issues within their families or jobs.



**Saturday, September 23, 2017**

**7:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**

**Double Tree by Hilton - 743 Horizon Dr.**

“Not being able to speak...is not the same as not having anything to say.” --  
Rosemary Crossley



# WHAT IS THE WESTERN SLOPE ABILITIES CONFERENCE?

This conference is designed to provide education and networking opportunities for parents, educators and other service providers. The primary objective is to increase the knowledge base, sensitivity and collaboration among family members of children, adolescents and adults with disabilities and/or mental health issues and service providers.

Providing resources and effective interventions to these individuals is a challenge faced by parents, schools, and other agencies. With that in mind, and in an effort to meet needs more effectively, agencies throughout the community have jointly sponsored the Western Slope Abilities Conference (formerly known as the Western Slope Autism Conference) since 2014. One hundred percent of the money raised for the Conference will stay right here in Mesa County and will be used directly on the costs of the conference or to provide scholarships to families.

The concept of the conference was designed by the "Autism Task Force" in 2009. This group was comprised of parents, members of community agencies, school district employees, service providers, and physicians. In 2013, Strive responded to community interest by creating a medically focused conference. What Strive found was not only an interest from medical providers but from families and educators alike. School District 51 and Strive recognize the need for family, educational and medical workshops that reach out to all community members. Knowing this need, the two agencies came together to support one comprehensive conference with support and information for all.

## CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Tanya Skalecki & Monika South - Conference Coordinators

Ann Gillies  
Kathy Lyn  
Rochelle Larson

Candice Batterson  
Laura Coulter  
Sally Huddle

Cathy Bozarth  
Lisa Melchior  
Sarah Sharp

Dawn Cruickshank  
Marla Oppenheim  
Sheri Campbell



# WESTERN SLOPE ABILITIES CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Saturday, September 23, 2017

7:15 – 7:45 a.m.	Conference Check-In – <i><u>You must be pre-registered!</u></i>
7:45 - 8:00 a.m.	Welcome & Announcements–Vendor & <i>Barnes &amp; Noble</i> Book Fair
8:00 – 10:00 a.m.	Dr. Richard Villa: The Inclusive School
10:00 – 10:15 a.m.	Break
10:15 – 12:15 p.m.	Dr. Patrick Schwarz: Autism & his book: Just Give him the Whale
12:15 – 1:45 p.m.	Lunch (Vendor and <i>Barnes &amp; Noble</i> Book Fair)
1:45 – 3:45 p.m.	Heather Forbes: The Trauma Sensitive Classroom
3:45 – 4:30 p.m.	Wrap Up, Vendor & <i>Barnes &amp; Noble</i> Book Fair

## PRESENTERS:



**Dr. Richard A. Villa**, president of Bayridge Consortium Inc., is an internationally known expert on the development of support systems for educating all students in general education. Dr. Villa has served as a middle and high school social studies and science, special education, and Title 1 teacher; a special education coordinator; a director of pupil personnel services; and a director of curriculum and instruction.

He has authored 20 books and over 100 chapters and journal articles on topics from co-teaching and differentiated instruction to inclusion and leadership in school reform and restructuring. Dr. Villa is a highly sought-after district, state, national and international professional development presenter, consultant, and coach. He is known for his knowledgeable, enthusiastic, audience-engaging, and humorous presentation style.

**Dr. Patrick Schwarz** is a dynamic and engaging professor, author, motivational speaker and leader in Education (Inclusive Education, Special Education, General Education, Educational Leadership) and Human Services. He is a professor at National Louis University, Chicago. Patrick's company is Creative Culture Consulting LLC. He is the author of *From Disability to Possibility*<sup>™</sup>, *You're Welcome* (with Paula Kluth), *Just Give Him the Whale* (with Paula Kluth) and *Pedro's Whale* (with Paula Kluth). His new book is *From Possibility to Success*.





**Heather T. Forbes**, LCSW, is the owner of the Beyond Consequences Institute and the co-founder of the Codega Foundation. Forbes has worked in the field of trauma and healing since 1999. She is an internationally published author on the topics of raising children with difficult and severe behaviors, the impact of trauma on the developing child, adoptive motherhood, and self-development. Additionally, Forbes has a heart for children in the classroom and for finding ways to teach the child that seems “unteachable.” Her signature style is to bridge the gap between scientific research and real-life application to equip parents, educators, and therapists with practical and effective tools. Much of her

experience and insight on understanding trauma, disruptive behaviors, and adoption-related issues comes from her direct mothering experience of her two adopted children. Heather is also the author of three best-selling parenting books and two cutting edge trauma-informed school resources.

Here are the top three things Heather wants parent and professional to know about her that aren't in her formal bio:

1. Heather comes to this field as a professional, but more importantly as a parent who has been raising children with trauma for almost 19 years. She knows what it is like to be surrounded in trauma not from reading a book about it, but from living it daily.
2. The neuroscience behind the understanding of our children is fascinating. However, it serves absolutely no purpose if we don't know how to apply it in the most difficult of moments in our homes. Heather's goal is to always help parents bridge the gap between the science and the “what do I do know!?” moments with our children.
3. Although Heather has written four books about working with children with challenging behaviors and speaks on the topic around the US and the world, she openly admits that she still messes up with her own family! Heather shares this so you will give yourselves grace and forgiveness. This is one of the toughest “jobs” in the world and you can only do the best you can when working with this population of children. Love starts with loving yourself first.

# WESTERN SLOPE ABILITIES CONFERENCE REGISTRATION September 23, 2017

The Double Tree by Hilton  
743 Horizon Drive, Grand Jct., Colorado 81506

**Absolutely no NEW registrations will be taken "at the door"**

7:15-7:45 a.m. – Conference Check-In  
Conference starts promptly at 8:00 a.m.

**REGISTRATION FEE: \$75.00 per Person**  
***Fee includes assorted pastries and buffet lunch***

*\*We don't want this registration fee to be prohibitive for any parent who has a child with ASD. Please contact our office at 254-5192 regarding parent scholarships.*

**MAIL OR SCAN REGISTRATION to:**  
Make checks payable to MCVSD 51

Mesa County Valley School District  
596 N. Westgate Dr. (Attn: Monika South)  
Grand Junction, CO 81505  
Phone: (970) 254-5192  
Email: [monika.south@d51schools.org](mailto:monika.south@d51schools.org)

If you'd like to receive CMU's for your attendance, please click here [2017 Western Slope Abilities Conference](#) and register. There's no cost for the credit or certificate.

**REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS September 8, 2017**

---

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE CIRCLE:** Parent Educator Mental Health Medical Other \_\_\_\_\_

To be removed from this mailing list check here \_\_\_\_\_ **Please write legibly**

Special accommodations: \_\_\_\_\_

Office use only: Scholarship approved \_\_\_\_\_

**Mesa County Valley School District #51**  
**Office of Special Education-BTK**  
2115 Grand Avenue  
Grand Junction, CO 81501  
PHONE (970) 254-5192

Non-Profit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Grand Jct., CO  
Permit #207